

Introduction To



For Absolute Beginners

Introduction

WordPress now powers millions of websites around the world and its popularity continues to grow daily.

Whilst there is a huge amount of information out there for new and existing users, this popularity has its downsides for someone discovering WordPress for the first time. Information overload is a genuine problem as is a lot of the advice given by those with limited knowledge.

This report aims to examine and explain the very basics of WordPress to the uninitiated - what it is, what it can do and how to use it yourself, in simple English and avoiding jargon as much as possible. It will lay the groundwork for anyone learning about WordPress for the first time.

What Is WordPress?

In the simplest terms WordPress is a publishing software package used to build websites of all types. It began life as a blogging tool but has evolved into a very powerful and flexible software that can build all manner of things. You may hear it referred to as a "CMS" or Content Management System too.

Who Uses WordPress?

Millions of websites and blogs are powered by WordPress. It is used by everyone from individual bloggers to large corporations.

Why Is It So Popular?

In short, because it is very good. It is (relatively) easy to use, very flexible and powerful, and has a huge community support network and is also supported by a huge commercial marketplace.

In the following pages we will explain and attempt to answer all the questions a complete newcomer will encounter as they delve into the world of WordPress for the first time.

Let's begin by clearing up one of the most common causes of confusion over WordPress - even for those who use it already....

WordPress.com vs WordPress.org

WordPress is free software. However, this statement in itself doesn't tell the whole story.

There are basically two "flavours" of WordPress and this in itself causes immense confusion online. Let's examine the differences between WordPress.com and WordPress.org and which of the two best suits your needs.

The official explanation from WordPress can be viewed at the following link:

[WordPress.com VS WordPress.org](#)

WordPress.Com

Millions of people use WordPress.com for their blogs. It is a free service which anyone can sign up for online. Once you have signed up for an account, it is simply a case of logging in to your new admin area and starting to add content. It is about as simple as WordPress gets - if you can use a word processing program you'll be able to write just as easily with WordPress.com.

If you are intending to start a simple or personal blog with no expectations of earning revenue or commercial aspirations it's hard to beat.

As with all free things it comes with limitations. Whether these are important to you or not will depend entirely on your plans for your site(s).

You have probably read or heard that WordPress is infinitely customizable with thousands of themes and plugins and it's true. However, WordPress.com will not enable you to avail of these things.

The plus side of WordPress.com is that it is completely free and less complex for a complete beginner. That's not to say there is no learning curve, there is, but it's not too intimidating. WordPress.com takes care of all the technical stuff behind the scenes and leaves you to concentrate on writing and adding content to your site. It is a solid and well established service that is extremely unlikely to go the way of the Dodo overnight leaving you high and dry and has a very active and extensive support network.

The notable limitations or downsides, whilst insignificant for many people are extremely significant for others.

As a WordPress.com user you do not really own your own content and have to abide by

the service's rules and restrictions. Failure to do so could see your site and all your work taken offline. It is important to know what is and isn't acceptable before you start. A good deal of commercialism is not the place for WordPress.com and using third party advertising services (for example Google AdSense) is not permitted.

Design limitations. Wordpress sites are built using themes or templates and the service offers a good selection for users to choose from, both free and paid. However, this means that your site(s) are probably going to look like thousands of others. You are restricted to using only those that are contained in their inventory and whilst some customization is allowed, that will entail the need to learn how to change CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) code which, as a novice is probably not something you will be familiar with and will have to learn.

You will probably have read or heard that WordPress users can do virtually anything to customize their sites with themes and plugins that number in the thousands and it's true. However, WordPress.com users cannot make use of these things.

After signing up your new site will have an address something like:-

yoursitename.wordpress.com

If you have a domain name already that you prefer to use you can do so. However, note that using your own domain at WordPress.com does not alter the normal restrictions we've already discussed.

Having said all this, if you decide to start out with a site on WordPress.com there is nothing to stop you from moving everything to WordPress.org once you have gained more experience. The process of doing so has been made a lot easier than it used to be so, if you find you outgrow WordPress.com for any reason, it's not a major problem.

[Visit WordPress.Com](http://WordPress.Com) for all further information.

WordPress.Org

If WordPress.com doesn't fit your needs, then you need to look at hosting the WordPress software on your own domain, using your own web hosting account. As already mentioned, the WordPress software is and always has been free. However in order to use it to build your site(s) you are going to need those two things.

Firstly let's look at the pros and cons of doing so and then move on to explain some of the most common technical obstacles and questions new users usually have.

Hosting WordPress on your own domain opens up the infinite possibilities that the software offers. Like WordPress.com, users of WordPress.org have at their disposal a huge support network of users with an immense amount of expertise. It is comforting to know that there are so many willing helpers out there when you are learning the ropes.

You will own your own content - you can do pretty much what you like in terms of design and content. The functionality and look of your site depends only on your imagination, ability, time and dedication.

Now, many people will tell you that the reason WordPress is so popular is because it is "easy". This invariably comes from people who have forgotten what it was like to be a complete beginner, starting from a knowledge and experience base of zero!

WordPress is relatively easy BUT, if you intend to build your own sites on WordPress.org there is a steep learning curve and the learning never stops. It is certainly more technical than using WordPress.com.

Having said that, if you are prepare to persevere and deal with the inevitable frustrations you will encounter when starting out, it can be a hugely rewarding experience.

With the community of millions of users out there, it is rare to be unable to resolve most issues. As a WordPress.org user you will be able to take advantage of the thousands of themes and plugins, free and commercial that are available. You are truly the master of your own site(s).

How much technical knowledge do you need? Well, too much is never enough but the vast majority learn as they go, at their own pace and this will probably be the case for you too.

The initial technical hurdles are rarely as insurmountable as they may seem to you at first so let's move on and get into some plain English explanations of what you need to know to get started if you decide to build your first website with WordPress.org.

Getting Started With WordPress.org

Getting A Domain Name

The first essential is going to be to select your chosen domain name. A domain name is, in simple terms, your address on the web. WordPress.com is a domain name, as is WordPress.org.

In order to register/buy a domain name you need to go to one of the many registrars online.

We have always used [NameCheap](#) and have never had problems or cause for complaint. Their prices are competitive and they are well established and efficient but you are free to choose whichever company you prefer.

Your domain name is going to be the address that people will need to find your site on the web. Choose wisely, something simple to remember is good, something relevant to your site's subject matter is also good although not essential. Don't agonize over it too much despite what you may have read elsewhere.

All you have to do is search for the name you would like and see if it's available. If it is great, you can buy it!

That is really all there is to it. You can choose from a number of extensions and the alternatives will be displayed to you when you are browsing the domain registrar's site - so, if the .com address you want is not available you may be able to get a .net for example. You can also get country specific domains if you feel the need i.e. .co.uk

Once you have bought your first domain name it's time to deal with the web hosting:

Getting A Hosting Account

This is another area that is often made more complicated than it needs to be, largely due to information overload and over thinking the whole thing. Add to that the huge number of hosting companies, user horror stories and recommendations and you can soon find yourself unable to commit to anything.

Let's make it simple. We have used several services over the years and have encountered the awful to the excellent. Any of the following companies will be more than adequate for first time customers, they are all WordPress friendly, they offer affordable prices, reliability and, probably most importantly for new users, good customer support services:

Hostgator - Big name, reliable, well featured with good support.

BlueHost - Big Name, reliable, well featured, with good support

KnownHost - The company we use for all our own hosting needs. Excellent.

If you've read this far and are already finding the idea of domains and hosting causing you heart palpitations there is one alternative worth mentioning at this point.

There are now several companies that offer complete WordPress hosting and management services. One of the first and the best, with their famous "2 Minute Setup" can literally have you up and running with your own WordPress site on your own domain (which they provide free of charge) in a couple of minutes.

[Learn More About Managed WordPress Services From Page.ly Here](#)

Once set up, the service takes care of all WordPress updates for you as well as regular backups of your site(s) among other things. If you go the traditional route all these

things will be your own responsibility.

It may not sound like much but even some experienced users are switching to this and similar managed services as they no longer have to worry about these tedious administrative tasks. And they can be a chore as any WordPress user will probably tell you, which is why they are often neglected, sometimes with huge regrets. Services like this cost a little more. Whether that additional cost is worth it is for you to decide. Another highly regarded alternative can be found at [WP Engine](#)

Once you have purchased hosting, you need to tell your hosting company about the domain name you wish to host and they will help you through the process of linking your domain to your account.

We're not going to go all technical and talk about "DNS" - the hosting company will show you exactly what you need to do to get your domain pointing to their Name Servers and it should be simple enough. If you don't understand anything, your host will help.

Installing WordPress On Your Hosting Account

Having got this far it is now time to install WordPress onto your server space. If you choose any of the three hosting companies mentioned above they offer an extremely simple point and click way of doing this which is fully documented for customers at their respective sites. They will also help you should you run into any difficulties.

If you elect to use a different host they may or may not offer similar services - many do, some don't. We recommend you look for a host that offers cPanel and Fantastico - these are the tools that offer the easiest WordPress installation.

Note: If you are using a hosting account for the first time there is another learning curve. The abovementioned hosts offer very good support but remember - most will not offer support for software that you install beyond the initial installation - the level of assistance they will give you varies enormously. You are now a website owner and the responsibilities are ultimately yours. Knownhost are particularly good in this regard however often offering support and help where many hosts will not.

Once you have installed WordPress successfully you can start to explore and build your first site.

Because there are literally thousands of avenues open to you from this point on it is impossible to cover them all here. Instead we will give you an overview of the first steps you will be taking as a new WordPress user and try to answer some of the most common beginner questions and walk through those initial steps.

We'll cover some of the most important steps to get you up and running as painlessly as possible and from there on the WordPress world is really your oyster.

Log In To Your WordPress Admin Dashboard

To get to your WordPress admin dashboard type your site's URL into the address bar of your browser and add /wp-admin to the end of it.

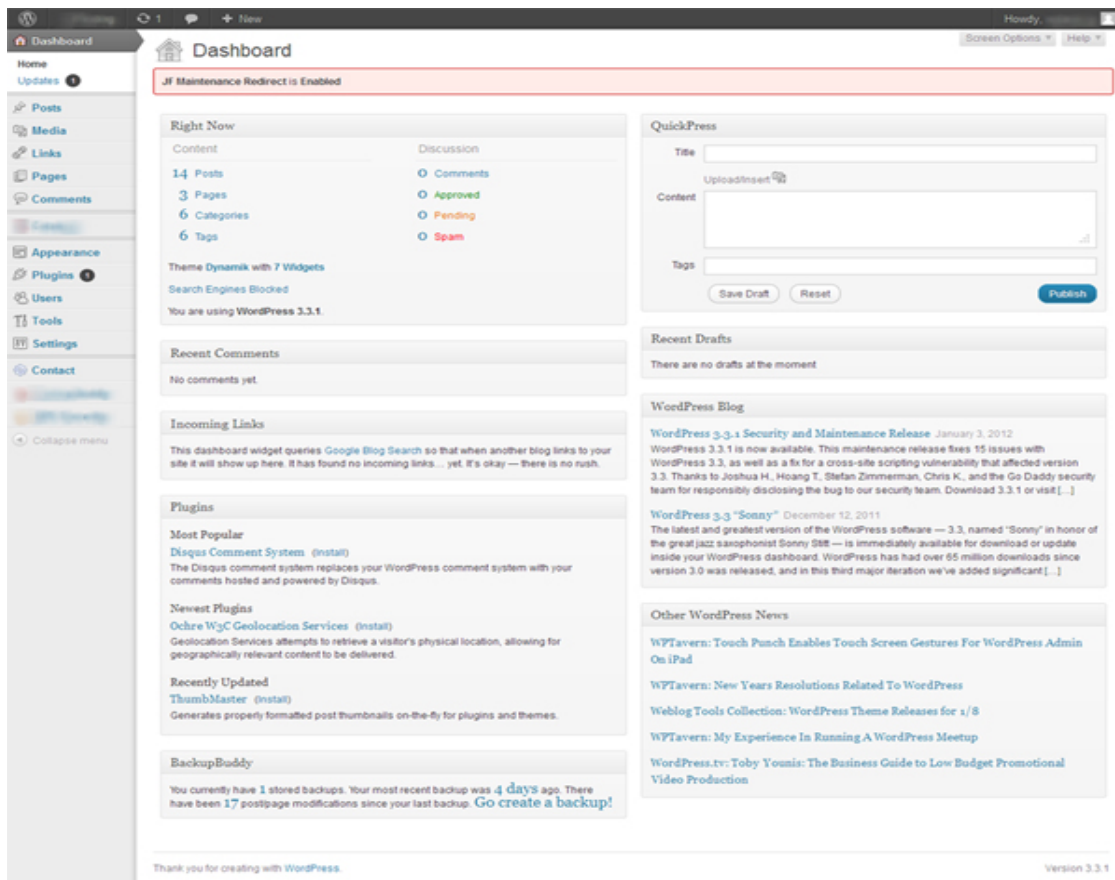
i.e. <http://yourdomain.com/wp-admin>

(replacing yourdomain.com with your own domain name obviously) You will then see the login screen, where you need to enter your username and password that you chose when installing the software.

A screenshot of the WordPress login interface. At the top center is the WordPress logo, which consists of a circular emblem containing a white 'W' on a dark background, followed by the word 'WORDPRESS' in a blue, serif, all-caps font. Below the logo is a white rectangular login form with a subtle drop shadow. The form contains two text input fields: the first is labeled 'Username' and the second is labeled 'Password'. Below the password field is a checkbox labeled 'Remember Me'. To the right of the checkbox is a blue button with the text 'Log In' in white. Below the login form, there are two links: a blue underlined link that says 'Lost your password?' and a blue underlined link that says '← Back to WPTesting'.

Once logged in you will see your Dashboard which will look similar to the screenshot on

the next page. Here is where you will do the bulk of the work on your new site, from adding content, customizing the look, changing themes, adding plugins and monitoring all aspects of your WordPress site.



There are now a couple of things to set up before you do anything else. Let's run through them each in turn.

In the left hand navigation menu you will see a selection of options. Hover over "Settings" and a sub-menu will appear - when it does select "Privacy"

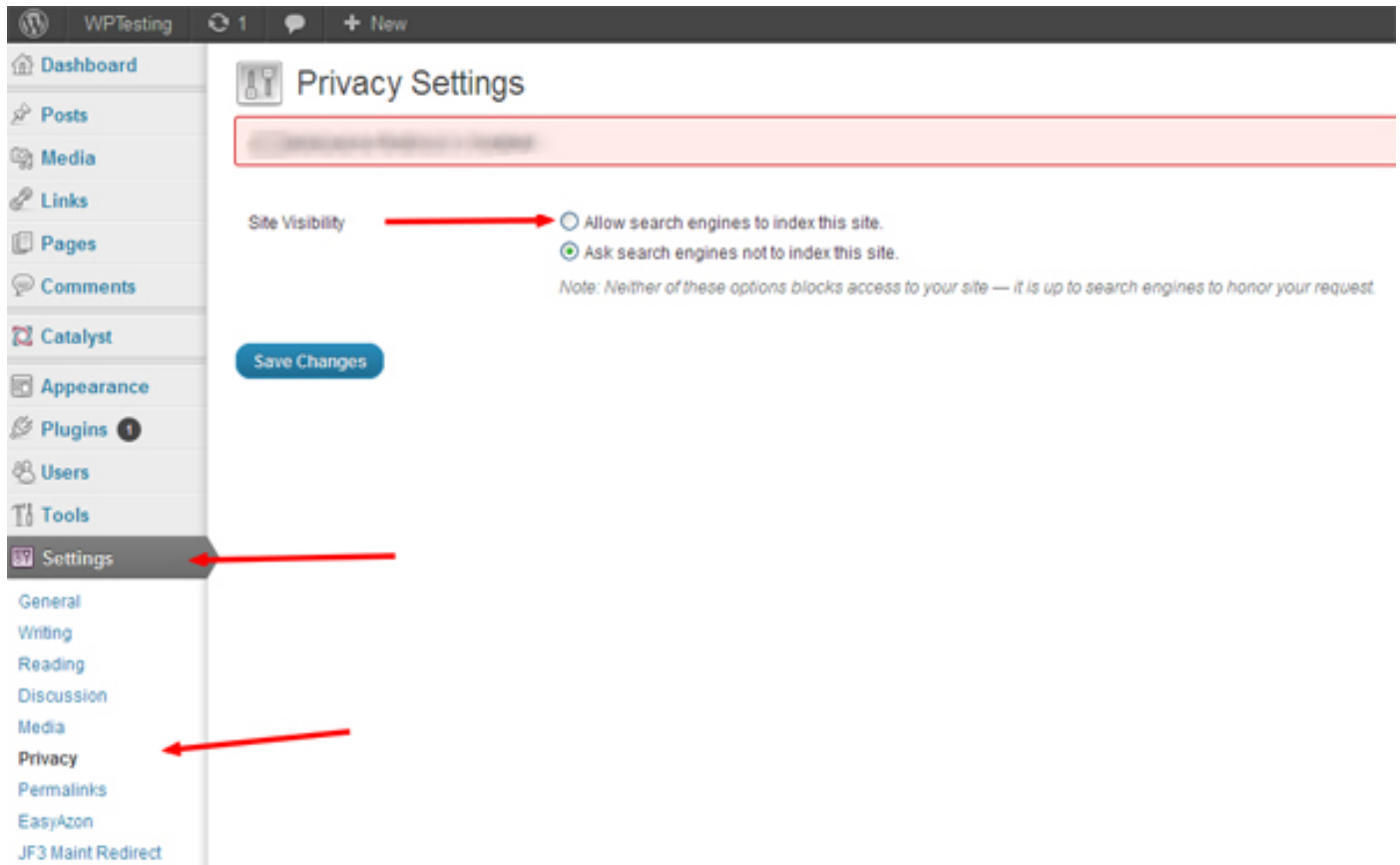
Select the radio button that says "Allow Search Engines To Index This Site as shown below in the screenshot.

If you don't do this your site will not get indexed by the major engines. If you are working on your site and want to prevent indexing while you get things ready you can leave the alternative checked if you wish.

Just don't forget to change it or you will soon be wondering why Google is not indexing

your site!

(The option not to index is a request - it does not guarantee no indexing of your site - i.e. it does not protect your site from being crawled but the majority of important search engines will obey the request)



Next we will set the permalinks for our new site. Without getting too technical, permalinks are the way WordPress deals with how the links on your site will appear to the search engines - we want to make them as attractive and relevant as possible and the default WordPress format is not ideal.

Click on the "Permalinks" option under the same "Settings" menu and you will see the options for setting your own custom permalink settings as in the screenshot below.

Select the radio button marked custom structure and enter your desired choice. The most common and most oft recommended choices are:

`/%postname%/` (This uses only the title of your posts in your link structure)

`/%category%//%postname%/` (this will add the category before the postname)

Once set click on "Save Changes". There are many more options but we would recommend using one of the above. For more detail on permalinks you can read the official explanation on [Using Permalinks](#) at the WordPress site. We always use just postname.

Common Settings

<input type="radio"/> Default	<code>http://wptestng.thecaymanhost.com/?p=123</code>
<input type="radio"/> Day and name	<code>http://wptestng.thecaymanhost.com/2012/01/09/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Month and name	<code>http://wptestng.thecaymanhost.com/2012/01/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Numeric	<code>http://wptestng.thecaymanhost.com/archives/123</code>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Post name	<code>http://wptestng.thecaymanhost.com/sample-post/</code>
<input type="radio"/> Custom Structure	<input type="text" value="/%postname%/"/>

Optional

If you like, you may enter custom structures for your category and tag URLs here. For example, using `topics` as your category base with `/uncategorized/`. If you leave these blank the defaults will be used.

Category base	<input type="text"/>
Tag base	<input type="text"/>

[Save Changes](#)

Next, under "General Settings" make sure your site's title and tagline are set to what you want. Remove the default tagline immediately - "Just Another WordPress Blog" is not what you want to appear to your visitors.

Title and tagline are important and should be tightly focused on the theme and subject of your site if you want people to find your site when they search. Calling your site something vague like "Joe's Blog" with a tagline like "Joe's Thoughts on Life" won't help the search engines categorize your site in any meaningful way.

The remainder of the settings menus are fairly straightforward but it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with them and learn what they do because some of the settings will determine how your site will display posts, pages and various other things as well as allowing you to set the options for things such as comments.

Any changes you do make are easily changed again if you change your mind or find the need for different behaviour in the future.

The only thing you should decide upon at the outset and leave alone thereafter are the permalinks settings discussed above. It is important to get that right from the outset and leave it alone.

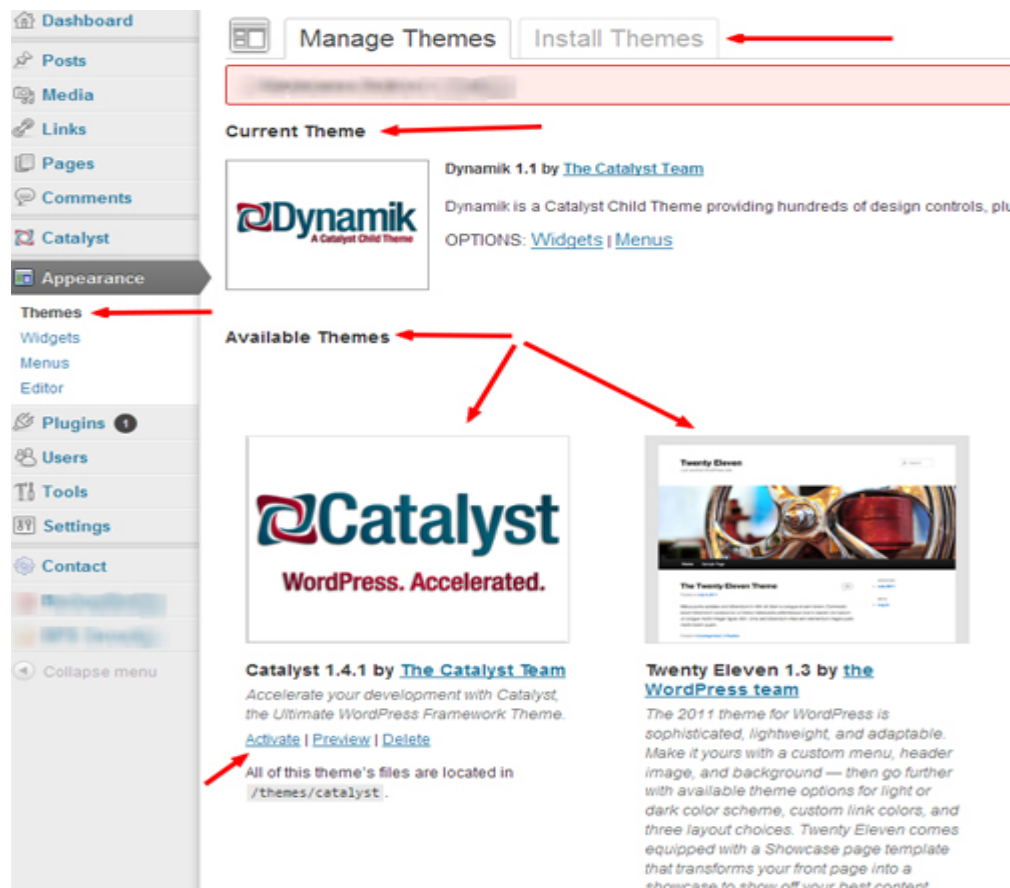
Having taken care of these basics you can begin to customize your site and make it your own.

We will look at a couple more things as they are frequently areas where new users come unglued or encounter various niggling problems.

WordPress Themes

We'll start with themes. Your WordPress installation will come with a couple of themes pre-installed - Currently these are called "Twenty Ten" and "Twenty Eleven" You can of course use either of these and you can customize them to your heart's content if you have the inclination and/or the knowledge of how to do so. As a minimum you will probably want to change things like the header image and title etc. This is beyond the scope of this very basic introduction but a quick Google search will almost certainly lead you to a wealth of instructional videos and articles on how to do such things.

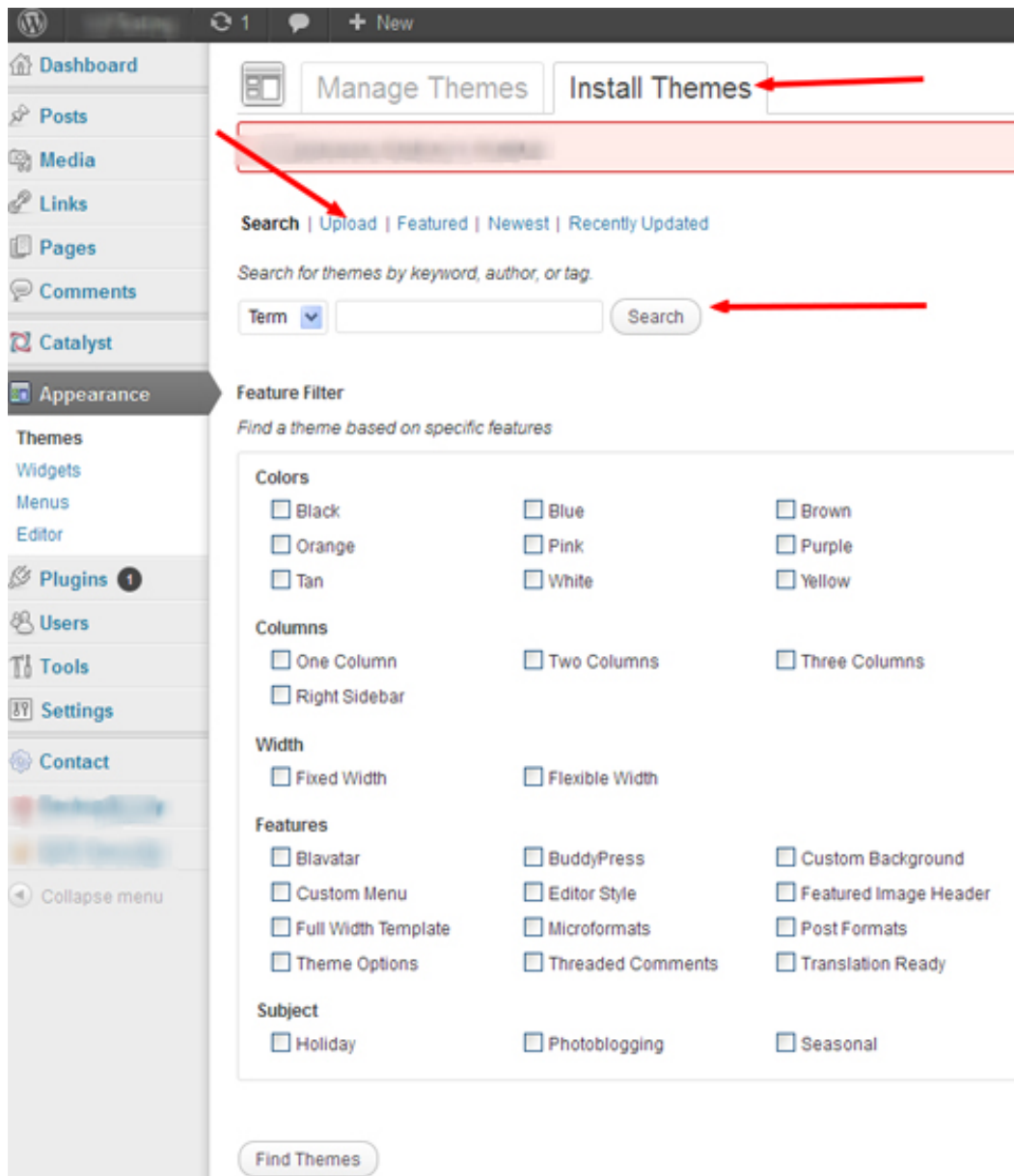
If you want to add different themes, click on the "Appearance" > "Themes" menu



You can now see the currently active theme along with any others you have installed. You can switch between them at any time but remember that when you make changes to one theme, some or even a lot of the changes won't carry over to a different theme and you may have to add some things manually and make changes to get things to look the way you want.

If you want to add a new theme click in the "Install Themes" tab at the top of the screen. You can then search the entire inventory of free themes approved by WordPress and install a theme of your choice. If you already have a theme saved to your hard drive you can click on the upload button and navigate to the theme's zipped file and upload it. WordPress will take care of unzipping and installing the theme for you.

After installing a new theme you will need to activate it before it will appear on your site.



In addition to all the free themes, you can access a wealth of premium themes for WordPress from various places all over the web. In doing so you are more likely to have a more unique looking site which will stand out more from the crowd. (More in the resources list at the end of the book).

As with all themes remember that it is basically a bolt on template. The addition of content and images is all going to have to be done by you. When you install a theme it will initially show only the default graphics and certain text and widgets that the designer used as placeholders.

If you already have content (posts and pages) they will appear but a lot of things will need changing after the theme is installed, such as your header, sidebar widgets etc. as

two theme layouts are rarely the same and WordPress needs to be told where to put everything under the new layout.

Themes are often an area where new users struggle to understand a wide range of issues. The first place to seek help is the website of the theme designer/author if you are having problems. Certainly a good premium theme will have avenues of support for your questions.

We should add one little word of caution about free themes. Some people put themes out there with all manner of hidden code and links in them. They do this for a variety of reasons and most of the time you won't even be aware of these hidden links. In the resources at the end of this book we have linked to some useful tools that will help you to check any themes you have downloaded from online sources for such hidden code and links. This should not be a problem with [themes in the approved WordPress.org directory](#) but for those that come from other sources are always worth checking, just to be sure.

WordPress Plugins

[The Official WordPress Plugin Repository](#)

There are so many plugins available for WordPress that it is impossible to cover even a fraction of them in a book like this.

In addition to all the free plugins there are thousands more premium plugins for users to choose from.

In the resources at the end of the book we have mentioned a few that we think you might find useful and helpful.

Installing plugins is a simple enough procedure. Click the "Plugins" menu and then "Add New". You will then have a choice to either search for free plugins by name - these are all the plugins listed in the WordPress Plugin Repository - or you can upload a plugin file that you have downloaded to your hard drive already in the form of a zipped file.

Once installed you will need to click the "Activate Plugin" link to make it "live" and there may well then be certain options to set up as required.

If you encounter problems when installing plugins, and sometimes you will, don't panic. Again most free plugins offer support and if they don't you can always use the WordPress.org Forums to find answers or ask questions. Premium plugins should always offer a help desk or forum.

Some plugins will conflict with other plugins so you may have to decide which one to keep, some may not work with the latest version of WordPress or may not speak nicely to your theme.....the possibilities are endless and can only be dealt with on a case by case

basis.

One quite common example that throws users is that they install a plugin, activate it, and the entire site goes AWOL. If this happens, and can't log into your site the best course of action is to use your hosting control panel or FTP program, navigate to the wp-content/plugins folder on your server and delete the folders and files for the offending plugin. This will invariably solve what initially seemed like a catastrophic disaster and everything will return to normal.

As a WordPress user you will soon become familiar with these things and learn to deal with them and troubleshooting will become a part of life for you!

It can be frustrating but patience and a methodic process of elimination is the best approach. If something starts not behaving as it should, disable all your plugins and re-enable them one by one until you find a culprit. If that doesn't work, switch back to the default theme and see if the problem is still occurring. Ultimately this is WordPress and somebody else has already had the problem you are experiencing and found a solution for it. Google is your friend and so are the WordPress support forums.

Ideally, the less plugins you need to use the better. Having said that, there is theoretically no limit on how many you can install and use. Just bear in mind that the more you use the more likely you are to start running into conflicts, the more you have to consider every time a WordPress update is released and there is also the effect on performance to consider.

WordPress can be a resource intensive application and some plugins can be terrible hogs! You can run into performance issues with some hosts fairly quickly - particularly on lower cost shared plans.

When you do, it will mean either upgrading your hosting plan (more expense) or paring down your site's resource usage.

But this is just a beginners guide and you shouldn't have to worry too much about server demands just yet! Let's move on to some other practical information.

Widgets:

If your theme is "widgetized" and most are widget ready nowadays, you will be able to use a selection of widgets to add contents to the sidebars of your site. Standard widgets can all be found under the "Appearance" > "Widgets" menu in your dashboard.

You can simply drag and drop your chosen widgets into your sidebar and order them as desired at any time by dragging them around. Widgets have their own settings which you can often tailor to your specific needs. The best way to learn what widgets can do is to experiment with them - a simple text widget for example can be used to display third

party java script code - Google AdSense ads being a particularly common example, but the list is endless really.

If you have a theme that allows custom widget areas you can use widgets in other places on your site too. If your theme doesn't allow this there are also plugins that you can use to give the same functionality, allowing you to place widgets in your posts and pages as well as your sidebar(s).

Widgets can be great time savers and you can do a lot with them to organize the look and content of your sites.

Brief Introduction To FTP Programs

Not so much a WordPress feature but something you probably have to use eventually. FTP software is what you use to upload or manage content on your hosting account from your machine.

It is particularly useful for transferring larger files.

If you use Firefox as a browser you can install an add on called FireFTP which is a fully featured FTP program, or alternatively, another popular tool is FileZilla. (See resources for more information on both).

Once you install an FTP program they are pretty intuitive to use - normally a directory structure on the left displays the files and folders on your local machine and, once logged in, a similar display of all the files and folders on your server.

You can get your FTP login details from your hosting company if you don't know them.

WordPress Additional Tips and Recommendations

By now you have probably realized that there is quite a lot involved in building and maintaining your own WordPress site(s) on your own domain.

Hopefully this basic introduction has given you an idea of what to expect and how to deal with the initial steps of stepping out on your own.

Whilst it was never the intention to cover day to day usage in detail or to provide answers to every WordPress problem you will ever encounter it may have helped you to decide if you are ready to dive in.

There is no need to be intimidated - remember that countless tens of thousands have gone before you and soon learned the ropes, or at least enough to get a great deal out of their websites.

We've added this final section to highlight a few other common issues that all WordPress users should be aware of.

Security - nothing online is ever 100% secure. Wordpress has its vulnerabilities like everything else and the security of your site depends on both you and your hosting company. There are several things you can do yourself to harden your WordPress installation against attack and they only take a few moments to put in place.

The following article will help all WordPress users close some of the most common weaknesses, which, the vast majority of users do not address:

[WordPress Security - Protecting Your WordPress Sites](#)

Backups - making regular backups of your site is extremely important. Most people only learn this after disaster strikes and they lose months of content or even their whole website. Don't be one of them.

Your hosting company may well keep backups of your data but don't be lazy and rely on them to do what you should be doing yourself.

The most outstanding backup solution is a plugin called [Backup Buddy](#) - it's something we recommend to all WordPress users because it works so well.

If you don't want to invest in such an excellent plugin, read more about [backing up your WordPress sites at wordpress.org](#) Backing up may not be sexy but it's essential nonetheless.

If you use a service like [Page.ly](#) or [WPEngine](#) back ups will be taken care of for you of course.

SEO or Search Engine Optimization is a huge topic and a often a contentious one. We can't cover it here but if you subscribe to our blog it is a topic we cover frequently particularly in relation to WordPress.

As to its importance, well, if you want people to find your site it's well worth learning a little more about. It's an ever changing sea but learning the basics isn't as hard as many would have you believe.

Don't fret about it too much - learn the basics and you will be streets ahead of 95% of other WordPress users.

With that, let's move on to a list of resources that you will find helpful in your WordPress world. It is by no means exhaustive but all have been extremely useful and

tested by us first hand. Take what you want from them and discard what you don't need or already have covered.

We hope you will enjoy using WordPress as millions of others do every day. Good luck!

Useful Resources & Tools

Plugins:

Note: Not all of these will be needed by all users. Much depends on your theme and overall site features but all of them have become permanent fixtures for many. Pick and test the ones you choose. Plugins can always be removed! Most of these are administrative in nature - either SEO, security or management related.

Akismet - anti spam plugin comes installed with default WordPress software. Activate it.

All In One SEO - probably one of the most well known SEO plugins and still pretty good.

WordPress SEO By Yoast - the most comprehensive SEO plugin. Can be a touch confusing for beginners but good documentation and support

Robots Meta by Yoast - another good free plugin to help your site's visibility in the search engine results.

(Note: Some SEO plugins are negated by good SEO optimized themes. Use as required if your theme doesn't do the work itself).

BulletProof Security - one of the best security plugins recently and installed on virtually all of our sites as a matter of course.

Google XML Sitemap Generator - excellent plugin, worth installing on any site.

Dagon Design Sitemap Generator - creates a fully customizable sitemap for your visitors in a few clicks as opposed to the previous plugin which creates a sitemap for the search engines.

TAC Plugin - Checks your theme for hidden codes and links. If you download a lot of free themes from random sites on the web run it through this.

Hypercache - a caching plugin that helps speed up the load times of your site.

W3 Total Cache - another caching plugin. Huge number of features but can be a bit heavy for new users. Recommended but use with care - getting it wrong can actually slow your site down so maybe for more experienced users.

[Free Autoresponder Plugin](#) - The best free autoresponder plugin for WordPress. Enables you to build a list of opt in email subscribers right from within WordPress.

The sheer number of plugins available make it almost impossible to give any kind of definitive list for any one individual so we are not going to try. As you learn more about WordPress and decide on things you want to do you will be able to seek out the plugins that help you to do what you want and need.

Themes:

[Themeforest Premium Themes](#) - a great collection of premium themes at reasonable prices in their easy to browse marketplace. There are plenty more premium theme marketplaces out there ranging from great to indifferent so seek feedback before you buy.

Theme Frameworks :

Frameworks are the coming thing with WordPress. They enable users to build what are known as "Child Themes" which run on the framework itself. So, instead of a bolt on template you are getting a tool which allows you total control over all aspects of the way your sites will look. If you want ultimate design control and features a good framework is a great investment.

[Catalyst Theme Framework](#) - excellent framework and now our preferred WordPress tool of choice. Best value and great features and support. Great for non coders with it's built in CSS editing capabilities.

[Thesis Theme Framework](#) - the granddaddy of frameworks. A powerhouse in its own right but maybe not as easy to master as some alternatives.

[Genesis Theme Framework](#) - Very slick contender in the framework wars. Flexible powerful and popular with designers

[Headway Themes](#) - an excellent choice for those who want good design control as it uses a drag and drop interface so can be used effectively even by non coders.

FTP Software :

[FireFTP For Firefox](#)

[FileZilla](#)

Web Hosting:

[KnownHost](#)

[Hostgator](#)

[BlueHost](#)

[Page.ly Managed WordPress](#)

[WPEngine Dedicated WordPress](#)

Installing WordPress On Your Local Machine:

If you would like to install WordPress on your local machine (PC or MAC) for testing purposes the two best options are either [XAMPP](#) or [Instant WordPress](#) both will enable you to set up a testing environment which can often be useful when evaluating the effect of changes on your real site before going live with them etc.

We hope you have found this report helpful. You may give copies away freely to others provided that the content remains unchanged. Whilst it only scratches the surface it should be appreciated by anyone just starting out.

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